

Promoting Tourism in Pakistan: Opportunities and Challenges

Outlines:

1) Introduction:

Thesis Statement:

• There are several opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan. However, its prospects are impeded by innumerable challenges which can be overcome by effective policies.

2) Current Scenario of Tourism in Pakistan

3) Opportunities for promoting Tourism in Pakistan:

- (i) Old cultural heritage and historical sites
- (ii) natural landscape and high mountain peaks.
- (iii) Diverse variety of wildlife.
- (iv) wide open grounds for sports, tourism

- v) Different kinds of food to promote culinary tourism
- vi) Vibrant religious and cultural festivals

4) Challenges to the promotion of tourism in Pakistan:

- i) Security threats by terrorists and insurgents
- ii) long - delays in getting visa
- iii) Poorly developed infrastructure which hinders connectivity
- iv) Negative image of Pakistan in the outside world.
- v) Ineffective disaster management to avert the natural disasters in tourist spots.
- vi) Pollution has tarnished the beauty of tourist sites.

5) Steps to overcome the challenges to the promotion of tourism in Pakistan?

- (i) Improves the security situation by strict implementation of law enforcement policies
- (ii) Develop the infrastructure to enhance connectivity

6- Conclusion

Essay

According to the Lonely Planet, a travel guide book publisher, "Pakistan is home to some of the most spectacular natural beauty in the world." The land of Pure has been bestowed with breath-taking natural beauty. People from all around the world visit Pakistan to explore its beauty. Therefore, the Tourism Department of Pakistan works to promote tourism in Pakistan. There are several opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan. Firstly, cultural heritage and historical sites of Pakistan have the potential to attract tourists. In addition, towering or sky piercing mountain peaks and sprawling grounds for sports lure tourists towards visiting Pakistan. Moreover, vibrant religious and cultural festivals of

Pakistan have the potential to promote tourism. However, the opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan are blighted with several challenges. These include: security threats posed by terrorists, delays in getting visa, poorly developed infrastructure and ineffective disaster management facilities in the tourist spots. The challenges to promoting tourism in Pakistan can be overcome by improving the security situation and developing the infrastructure of the country. Thus, there are several opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan. However, its prospects are impeded by innumerable challenges which can be overcome by effective policies.

The current scenario of tourism in Pakistan is highly satisfactory. A general rise in the tourism has witnessed. Pakistan

is fast becoming a favorite destination, to visit, for foreign tourists. In 2023, around 100,000 foreign tourists visited Pakistan, which was the highest in the last seven years. Thus, tourism in Pakistan is improving.

Pakistan offers rich cultural heritage and historical sites for the promotion of tourism of the country. The cultural heritage sites are present all over the country.

The most notable of them are Mohenjo Daro situated in Sindh, Takht-i-Bahi Buddhist monastery in KP. The historical sites of Pakistan also draw people from all over the world.

The historical sites of Pakistan include: Lahore Fort, Badshahi mosque and Shalimar Gardens etc. Thus, the cultural heritage and historical sites have huge potential for promoting tourism in Pakistan.

The natural landscape and high mountain peaks play a pivotal role in the promotion of tourism in Pakistan. Pakistan has diverse natural landscape like river, mountains, deserts and plainy areas. So, such diverse landscape promotes tourism. Moreover, Pakistan is home to sky-piercing mountain peaks which attract mountaineers. For instance, Pakistan has the world second highest mountain peak K2 which with a height of 8611 meters. Other mountain peaks are Nanga Parbat and Tirich Mir etc. Hence proved, the diverse landscape and high mountain peaks can help in the promotion of tourism in Pakistan.

The diverse variety of wildlife can help in the promotion of Pakistan's tourism. There are several people in the world who

are fond of exploring wildlife. Pakistan is home to a variety of wildlife which includes: Markhor, Snow Leopard, Himalayan brown bear etc. Thus, the wildlife of Pakistan provides opportunity for promoting tourism.

The sprawling grounds of Pakistan provides opportunity for the promotion of sports tourism. Most of the people show keen interest in sports. Pakistan caters to their need as it offers grounds for playing sports.

The most important grounds for sports in Pakistan are Jinnah Sports Stadium in Islamabad, National Hockey Stadium in Lahore and People's Football Stadium in Karachi. Hence, the wide open grounds of Pakistan have the potential to promote sports tourism in the country.

Pakistan offers a diverse kinds of food to promote culinary tourism. Due to distinct taste of Pakistani food, several tourists visit Pakistan. To satisfy their taste buds, Pakistan offers food like Biryani, Nihari, Haleem and Chapli kabab etc. Thus, Pakistan has great potential of promoting culinary tourism.

The vibrant religious and cultural ^{festivals} ~~heritage~~ of Pakistan ^{also} provide opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan. Some tourists take interest in exploring the popular festivals of different countries. Some of the religious and cultural festivals of Pakistan are Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, Kalash festival and Shandur polo festival etc. Hence proved, different festivals of Pakistan attract tourists and promote tourism of the country.

The preceding paragraphs explained different opportunities for promoting tourism in Pakistan. Now, the following paragraphs will explain the challenges in the way to promoting tourism in Pakistan.

The big challenge, to the promotion of tourism in Pakistan, is security threats posed by insurgents and terrorists. Tourists avoid visiting such places where their lives are not safe. The rising threats of terrorism can hinder the prospects of tourism. According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSSS), "Around 757 people are killed in the terrorists attack in the first eight months of 2021." Thus, the deteriorating security situation in Pakistan decreases the prospects of promoting tourism in the country.

Long delays in getting visas hinders the promotion of

of tourism in the country. Due to delays in getting visa, tourists make up their mind to visit other places which are easily accessible. The delay in getting visas is due to administrative inefficiencies and additional screening or clearance requirement for certain countries. Thus, delay in getting visa act as an obstacle to promoting tourism in Pakistan.

Poorly developed infrastructure which hinders connectivity acts as a challenge to the promotion of tourism. Due to inefficient infrastructure, people can not access the tourists spots. For instance, perilous roads, inavailability of rest rooms and restaurants in certain tourist spots discourage tourism in Pakistan. Thus, ineffective infrastructure acts as a hurdle to promoting tourism in Pakistan.

Negative image of Pakistan in the outside world decreases the prospects of promoting tourism in Pakistan. The media often project the image of Pakistan as an extremist country and the country which has bad security conditions. As a result, many tourists avoid visiting Pakistan out of fear. Hence proved, the negative image of Pakistan act as a challenge to the promotion of tourism in the country.

Ineffective disaster management to avert natural disasters in tourist spots, acts as a huge challenge to promoting tourism. Due to inavailability of disaster management, people (tourists) may lose their lives in case of disaster. For instance, 22 people died in Murree in a deadly snowstorm owing to ineffective disaster management services. Thus, inavailability

of disaster management in tourist spots acts as a recipe for disaster and deters tourists from visiting such places.

The widespread land pollution has tarnished the beauty of tourist sites. When people visit the tourist sites, they leave behind garbage. As a result, the aesthetic beauty of tourist areas decrease. According to the Express Tribune report, "the pollution problem at tourist spots is a global issue but it has become more acute in Pakistan's context. Thus, pollution in tourist spots impede the chances of promotion of tourism in the country.

The aforementioned paragraphs throw light on the challenges to the promotion of tourism in Pakistan. Now, the following paragraphs will explain measures to overcome the challenges to the promotion of tourism.

To overcome the challenges, the security situation should be improved. It can be achieved by the strict implementation of law enforcement policies. In addition, effective surveillance system should also be ^{installed} ~~exercised~~. Moreover, intelligence gathering and sharing can also minimize security related threats. Hence, improving the security situation can increase the prospects of promoting tourism in Pakistan.

Development of infrastructure to enhance connectivity can further increase the chances of promotion of tourism in Pakistan. Infrastructure can be developed by building roads, rest rooms and hotels near ^{tourist} areas. As a result, the number of tourists to recreational areas increased. Thus, the development of infrastructure is a pre-requisite for promoting tourism in Pakistan.

In a nutshell, Pak has high potential for tourism, because it provides several opportunities for promoting tourism. These include: cultural heritage, ~~and~~ historical sites, high mountain peaks, religious and cultural festivals etc. However, there are several challenges to the promotion of tourism in Pakistan. The challenges include: deteriorating security situation, visa delays, under developed infrastructure and ineffective disaster management facilities. By taking effective measures, like improving the security situation and developing the infrastructure, the challenges to tourism can be eliminated. Thus, these measures should be followed in letter and spirit to promote the tourism sector of Pakistan.